



U.S. Department of Justice

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For Immediate Release:

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Event: Complaint

Defendant: George Williams et al

**Medical Business Owner, Doctor and Pharmacist Charged
with Conspiring to Unlawfully Distribute Prescription Drug**

Acting United States Attorney Terrence G. Berg announced the unsealing of a criminal complaint charging a medical business owner, a doctor and a pharmacist with conspiring to unlawfully distribute prescription drug controlled substances, including the Schedule II prescription drug OxyContin (oxycodone). Mr. Berg was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Robert Corso, Drug Enforcement Administration.

The supporting affidavit alleges that between March of 2007 and December of 2008, the defendants obtained more than 200,000, dosage units of the potent pain killer OxyContin, valued at over \$5 million on the retail market. Furthermore, as a result of the defendants' illegal conduct, Medicare was billed over \$800,000, in 2008 alone, resulting in payments of over \$480,000, to the defendants' organization.

Named in the complaint were GEORGE WILLIAMS, age 50, of Detroit; DR. MILAGROS EBREO, M.D., age 68, of Port Sanilac; and MAHMOUD FARDOUS, registered pharmacist,

age 28, of Dearborn.

Special Agent in Charge Robert Corso stated: "It is a priority of the DEA and our law enforcement partners to halt the operations of those individuals who profit from the illegal diversion of legitimate prescription drugs. The arrests of Williams, Ebreo, and Fardous, has effectively halted the illegal distribution of hundreds of thousands of addictive prescription drugs across southeast Michigan.

The complaint alleges that GEORGE WILLIAMS organized a health care business under the name Quick Response Medical Professionals (QRMP). WILLIAMS recruited "fake patients" who were paid up to \$220, per patient visit. DR. EBREO would write controlled substance prescriptions for the "patients," usually OxyContin, but the patient would not be allowed to keep the controlled substance prescriptions. Instead, the prescriptions would be presented by WILLIAMS and other members of his organization to a cooperating pharmacy, where the pharmacist would provide the quantities of drugs directly to WILLIAMS. Medicaid then would be billed for both the unnecessary office visit and other procedures that were either not necessary or not performed. When questioned by agents, DR.EBREO admitted that she was told that patients were being paid to be examined, that she knew patients were not allowed to keep their prescriptions, and that she thought WILLIAMS had people selling the pills on the street, yet she continued to write controlled substance prescriptions for QRMP.

The complaint further alleges that one of the cooperating pharmacies used to fill the controlled substance prescriptions was Eastside Discount Pharmacy, 14366 Gratiot, Suite 100, Detroit, which was operated by MAHMOUD FARDOUS from April of 2008 until the present time. During June through October of 2008 alone, Eastside Discount Pharmacy distributed 28,188 dosage units of OxyContin and similarly large quantities of Vicodin, Xanax and cough syrup containing codeine under the Dr. Ebreo prescriptions. Intercepted wiretap conversations revealed that pharmacist FARDOUS did not fill the Dr. Ebreo prescriptions by providing the controlled substances to the named patient; instead, he provided the drugs in bulk to WILLIAMS. For example, on October 24, 2008, WILLIAMS was intercepted telling FARDOUS that he was going to send an associate to pick up "stuff" from the pharmacy. The associate

carried two large cardboard boxes of drugs from the pharmacy and loaded them into WILLIAMS' Mercedes-Benz. The drugs were taken to another location, where they were re-packaged for resale on the illegal market. As WILLIAMS left this location with the cardboard boxes full of drugs in his car, the Michigan State Police, who were cooperating in the investigation, stopped the car and seized three boxes from the vehicle, including about 700 dosage units of OxyContin. At WILLIAMS' typical selling price of \$25 per pill, the OxyContin alone was worth \$17,500. Other seizures from the organization included a seizure of over \$30,000 in cash from WILLIAMS after he flew to Alabama to conduct an OxyContin transaction.

On December 2, 2008, ten federal criminal search warrants that were executed in aid of this investigation. The execution of those warrants resulted in the seizure of the controlled substances OxyContin, Xanax, Lortab, Codeine based cough syrups, a small amount of heroin and heroin packaging materials." Asset forfeiture seizure warrants were executed on December 2, 2008. The execution of these warrants resulted in the seizure of over \$160,000 in cash and funds on deposit at various banks. In addition, automobiles and other items, valued in excess of \$60,000, were seized for forfeiture purposes. The searches were conducted by agents and investigators of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who were aided by local law enforcement agencies.

A conviction of this offense carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison or a \$1 million fine, or both. Any sentence will ultimately be imposed under the United States Sentence Guidelines according to the nature of the offense and the criminal background, if any, of the defendant.

All three defendants are scheduled to appear before a United States Magistrate Judge in Detroit at 1:00 p.m. today for an initial appearance on these charges.

A complaint is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. Trial cannot be held on felony charges in a complaint. This is an ongoing investigation that is expected to involve many other individuals. When the investigation is completed, a determination will be made concerning possible felony indictments.

The case is being investigated by agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Wayne F. Pratt and Michael Riordan.